

## Commentary

# Beat that old colonel in the PT test

SAN ANTONIO — Have you ever had your butt kicked by an old, crusty colonel during one of those “fun” runs? C’mon. Be honest.

Well, I did, and as a former track star (you know I was) and cross country runner, I was mad. Not only was I mad, I was out of shape ... so out of shape that comedian chunkster **Ralphie May** could take me in a marathon. It seems that eight years of marriage had beaten me up more than any 26-miler could have ... sorry honey.

I was hefty, hefty, hefty, and wimpy, wimpy, wimpy, and my bubble burst as that colonel trashed me on the 3-mile course that day. That’s when I vowed to get even. The sad thing is, I never did. He moved before I could get in good enough shape to take him out.

But the race is on again. Not just for me, but for all men and women in the Air Force. Only this time it’s not a “fun” run, it’s a physical training test. We are at war. Gen.

**John Jumper**, Air Force chief of staff, issued the challenge himself.

He said in his July Sight Picture, “I plan to lead all Air Force general officers in the Pentagon and the Washington, D.C., area in the PT test.” Wow! He just cold told the generals no one’s going to beat him. OK, he didn’t really put it in that context, but I still would pay to see someone take him in the last quarter mile, wouldn’t you?

The race is on folks. The new

fitness standards begin next month. The ultimate goal, of course, is to make fitness a daily standard, but we eventually want to do better than that. You know you want to beat your base commander, your chief, your supervisor or just your buddy who brags he or she was a track star in high school (you know I was).

Jumper said he thinks all of us can agree that we were disappointed with the fitness

standards we found when we came into the operational Air Force. I know I was.

“Let’s not disappoint ourselves any longer,” he said. “The message is simple: If you are out of shape, fix it. If you have people in your squadron who need help, help them. January 2004 is the date. Be ready.”

Bring it on.

— 2nd Lt. Chuck Widener

by Senior Airman Spencer Lilac



**Airman Rachel Nicole Murphy of the 43rd Civil Engineer Squadron** is gettin’ down to business as she trains for the new fitness standards with other squadron members as part of morning resistance training. Three times a week squadron members at Pope Air Force Base, N.C., do aerobic exercises and calisthenics as well as run 2.8 miles along the west and north sides of the flight line as part of the new fitness program.

## New ribbon recognizes deployed airmen

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas — Did you know the Air Force has a new ribbon? One that recognizes your work during air expeditionary force deployments?

The Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon is awarded to Air Force active duty, Reserve and Guard members who completed a contingency deployment after Oct. 1, 1999.

To qualify for the award, you must have deployed for 45 consecutive days or 90 nonconsecutive days. Any contingency deployment qualifies regardless of the duty, destination or location of the temporary duty, including those within the continental United States. There is also no time limit to accumulate the 90 nonconsecutive days.

Permanent party people overseas are not eligible for the ribbon, unless they’re forward-deployed on a contingency operation. People deployed on an overseas short tour can get both the ribbon and the Overseas Short Tour Ribbon, if they meet the requirements for both.

To receive the award, report to your military personnel flight after returning from a deployment. Present a copy of your orders and completed travel voucher along with any citations or certificates received while deployed to help prove your entitlement.

For more information, visit Air Force Personnel Center Personnel news at [www.afpc.randolph.af.mil](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil).

— Master Sgt. Randy L. Mitchell  
Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs